

7. 3. 18.

SCS #1475

Thomas F. Torrance

Scs #1475



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

This Volume contains

1. The Testimony, by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders.
 2. Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace, by the original Associate Presbytery.
 3. Act for Renewing the Covenants, by Do.
 4. Act for a Public Fast. 1827. by the Associate Synod of original Seceders.
 5. Act for Renewing the Covenants, by Do.
 6. Formula of Questions for ordination and License, by Do.
 7. Act for Covenanting by Ministers, Preachers, and Students of Divinity; including a Confession of the sins of the Ministry, by Do.
-

	Pages.
No 1.	176
— 2 —	68
— 3 —	44
— 4 —	4
— 5 & 6 — . . .	27
— 7 —	7
In all <u>326</u>	

A C T

OF THE

**ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF ORIGINAL
SECEDERS,**

FOR

COVENANTING

BY

MINISTERS, PREACHERS, AND STUDENTS OF DIVINITY;

INCLUDING A

CONFESSION OF THE SINS OF THE MINISTRY.

ACT, &c.

At Edinburgh, the 16th day of May 1828.

THE Synod having enacted an Acknowledgment of Sins and Bond, in which our Solemn Covenants should be renewed generally throughout the Body, and taking farther into their serious consideration the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, and the state of the public interests of religion at large, judge that the Ministers who formerly covenanted, have a call at this time to enter into the Bond anew, along with those of their number, and the Preachers and Students of Divinity under their inspection, who have not engaged in this work; and that for the following reasons, viz.

1st, Since we first engaged in that service, all of us, in various ways and in innumerable instances, have violated our solemn engagements; and reason, as well as Scripture, teaches us, that when lawful engagements have been violated, it must be dutiful to renew them, with an acknowledgment of the guilt contracted by the violation of them.

2dly, The great defection from the Reformation cause, and from a faithful testimony for its support, formerly and of late, particularly in the Secession, having greatly weakened the hands of the Synod, and exposed them to many temptations to fall from steadfastness, they consider themselves bound to take this step, as a special means of mutual excitement in the work of God, and of confirmation in the present truth.

3dly, In grateful acknowledgment to the Lord for his great mercy in bringing the members of this Synod together, after they had been scattered in his righteous displeasure, and in uniting them in sentiment and affection, in a degree seldom exemplified in the history of the church, they judge it their duty to renew their covenant with God, and their solemn pledge to one another, to walk together as brethren, and to strive together for the faith of the gospel.

4thly, Although the Synod, as witnesses for the truths of God, have adopted no new principles, and on that account do not consider themselves called upon to frame a new Bond of adherence to principles formerly espoused; yet being called to witness for these principles in new circumstances, from the late changes in the religious public at large, and in the Secession in particular, and by a new statement of their Testimony; they judge that the change of circumstances fully warrants those, who were formerly covenanters, to enter anew into the Bond. In connexion with this, it may be observed, that the Bond reduplicates on the Acknowledgment of Sins, in which various evils of recent date, or recent aggravations of former evils, are confessed, which those who formerly covenanted could not confess, nor engage to testify against.

5thly, This Synod having taken measures to promote the exercise of public covenanting among the people under their inspection, and being anxious to fix the attention of the friends of truth at large on this, as a special means of reviving religion and promoting reformation, consider themselves bound to set them an example, by entering anew into the Bond.

Lastly, This is agreeable to the practice of our reforming ancestors in Scotland on different occasions. Thus, the National Covenant, which had been sworn and subscribed by all ranks in 1581, was again sworn and subscribed by all ranks in 1590.* In like manner, the Solemn League and Covenant, which was entered into in 1643, was again sworn and subscribed by the same persons in 1648, at the direction and by the appointment of the Commissioners of the General Assembly, in consequence of the breaches of that Covenant, particularly by the engagement in war with England.†

For these and other reasons, the Synod, after serious deliberation, agree, That all the Ministers of their body, together with the Preachers and Students of Divinity under their inspection, shall enter into the Bond for renewing the Covenants, at Edinburgh, on the 18th day of September next; and that, on that occasion, after the reading of the common Acknowledgment of Sins, the following Acknowledgment shall be read in the name of the Ministers; viz.

* See Preamble to the National Covenant, as renewed in 1638.

† See Act of the Commission of the General Assembly, October 6. 1648.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE SINS OF THE MINISTRY.

We, Ministers of the Gospel, all, and every one of us, considering that we have had a deep hand in the general provocation, and that God calls particularly on the priests, the ministers of the Lord, to weep between the porch and the altar, in a time of abounding sin and threatened judgments, desire, in addition to the evils which we have already confessed, to acknowledge, and be humbled in the dust before God, for the sins with which we are chargeable in our public station.

We acknowledge and confess, That we have not been duly impressed with a sense of our own unworthiness for the sacred office, or of the condescension and grace which the Lord has shewn in investing us with it; we have not, with due earnestness, taken heed to the ministry which we have received from him to fulfil it; nor have we faithfully kept his charge and walked in his ways; on which account he might righteously have removed us from judging his house and keeping his courts.

We have reason to lament that we have often made the multiplicity of official duties an excuse for the neglect of the duties of personal religion, or for the partial and formal performance of them,—such as of secret prayer, meditation, and self-examination; so that, while employed as the keepers of the vineyard of others, our own vineyard have we not kept.

We have often been chargeable with the partial neglect of the more private duties of our station, such as catechising, visiting the sick, and exhorting from house to house, and making the carelessness of our people in attending upon some of these administrations an excuse for that neglect. In our preparation for the pulpit, we have not been duly careful to seek divine aid to direct us in the choice of our subjects, and to enable us to treat them in the way most calculated to promote the spiritual edification of those committed to our care. We have not been duly impressed with the vast importance of our office, as the ambassadors of Christ to sinners, and the awful responsibility attached to it; but have often given way to carelessness and formality on the one hand, or a desire to please men rather than to promote their godly edifying on the other, in our

public administrations. We have not been duly careful to seek the aid and direction of God's Spirit when about to dispense ordinances, nor, after being so employed, to water the seed sown, by our prayers to God, who alone can render it fruitful.

We have not cultivated that patience which should characterise the servants of Christ under the difficulties and discouragements we have met with, from our want of success, or the undutiful conduct of those among whom we labour; or, in so far as our labours have been successful, we have not guarded against self-complacency, nor been duly careful to ascribe all the praise of that success to God, who giveth the increase. We have not studied to maintain on our minds an habitual sense of the vast importance of the care of souls, and the awful consequences to ourselves, should they perish through our negligence; and not feeling, as we should do, the terror of the Lord, we have not, in many instances, acted up to the apostolic injunction, "Be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." In the exercise of discipline, and in the admission of members to communion, we have reason to confess, that we have not been always on our guard against the fear of man, or the unwarrantable ambition of increasing the number of our people, though at the expence of principle, and of that purity of morals which becomes God's house for ever.

We desire to confess, with deep sorrow, before God, that, in the arduous contest to which we have been called, formerly and of late, for the maintenance of the Reformation cause, we have, in many instances, come short of the glory of God, by giving way to fainting and despondency on the one hand, and to irritation of temper on the other. When called to testify against the great defection of many, with whom we were formerly connected in all the intimacies of religious fellowship, from those principles they, in common with us, once held sacred, we have not duly cultivated that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable. And, while we have seen and condemned the conduct of others in the defection, we have not been duly sensible of the deep share we have had in it, in consequence of our provoking the Lord to withdraw, by our personal sins, and our manifold failings in public conduct.

For all these our sins, and many others, on account of which shame and confusion of faces belong to us, we acknowledge, that a righteous and holy God might have caused us to cease from feeding his flock, and cast us out of his sight ; but, depending upon the promised influence of his Spirit, we desire to flee to the mercy of God, and to the blood of Christ, for pardon and purification, resolving, through the strength of his grace, to walk more singly and closely with him as christians and as ministers, and to watch against the above confessed and similar sins.

Extracted by

P. M'DERMENT, *Syn. Clk.*

Edinburgh, September 18th 1828.

On this day the Associate Synod of Original Seeders, with their Preachers and Students of Divinity, met in Professor Baxters Church Infirmary Street, along with a large Congregation, for the purpose of entering into the Bond for renewing our solemn National Covenants, according to their Act in the preceding part of this Book.

Public worship began about 11^o Clock, and, after praise and prayer, a Sermon was preached on Jeremiah 50. 5. Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord.

Mr James Grey of Brechin, the Moderator of Synod, intimated the work that was to be proceeded in.

Dr McEir of Edinr read the Act of Synod appointing the work, and confirming the Reasons for it.

Mr Duncanson of Dundee read the National Covenant of Scotland, and the solemn League and Covenant of the three Nations.

The

The Acknowledgment of Sins was then read in parts by Messrs Thomas Gray of Rathed, John Aitken of Aberdeen, and Robert Shaw of Whithorn, each of these being employed in prayer before reading his part.

Mr James Aitken of Pirriemuir read the Acknowledgment of the Sins of the Ministry.

Professor George Paxton offered up a Confessory Prayer.

After which Mr James Gray, the Moderator, read over the Bond to be sworn: and then administered it, reading it over again, the whole Ministers, Preachers of the Gospel, and Students of Divinity, standing with their hands lifted up to the most High God.

The Bond was immediately subscribed by them, in the presence of the Congregation, while employed in praise.

The following is the List of Subscribers.

We Undersubscribers, Ministers of the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, and Preachers of the Gospel, and Students of Divinity under their inspection, do subscribe the above Bond with our hands, at Edinburgh, this Eighteenth day of September, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty eight years; the said Bond having been this day first solemnly sworn

sworn by us.

- James Aitken, Minr. of the Gospel, Givrie minr.
Robert Chalmers Minr. Maddington
George Paxton - Minr. Edinburgh
James Gray - Minr. Brechin
5 Thos. McEue - Minr. Edinburgh
Robert Smith - Minr. Hilwinning
George Sturgeson - Minr. Ayr
Thos Gray - Minr. Gircaldy
Willm Brown - Minr. Perth
10 John Aitken - Minr. Aberdeen
Patrick McHenry Minr. Helso
Peter McDermott - Minr. Auchinloch,
Robert Shaw - Minr. Whittier
Alex Duncan - Minr. Dundee
15 James Cairncross - Minr. Birsay
Benjamin Loring - Minr. Arbroath
Thos McEue, Junr - Minr. Edinburgh
James Beattie - Minr. Balmullo
Thos Manson - Minr. Perth
20 Ebenezer Ritchie - Minr. Kirkwall
21 John Miller - Minr. Aberdeen
Willm Duncan, Preacher of the Gospel
James Meek - Preacher of the Gospel
John Burnfield - Preacher of the Gospel
25 Matthew Murray - Preacher of the Gospel
John Graham - Preacher of the Gospel

Andrew Lambie - Preacher of the Gospel

James Wright - Preacher of the Gospel

Archibald Brown - Student

30 James Anderson - Student

James Mc Geoch - Student

David Burn - Student

James Aitken Wylie - Student

George Proger - Student

35 Robt Auld - Student

John Cochran - Student

John Davidson - Student

Robt Murphy Cochran - Student

39 Cunningham Aitcheson - Student

In all

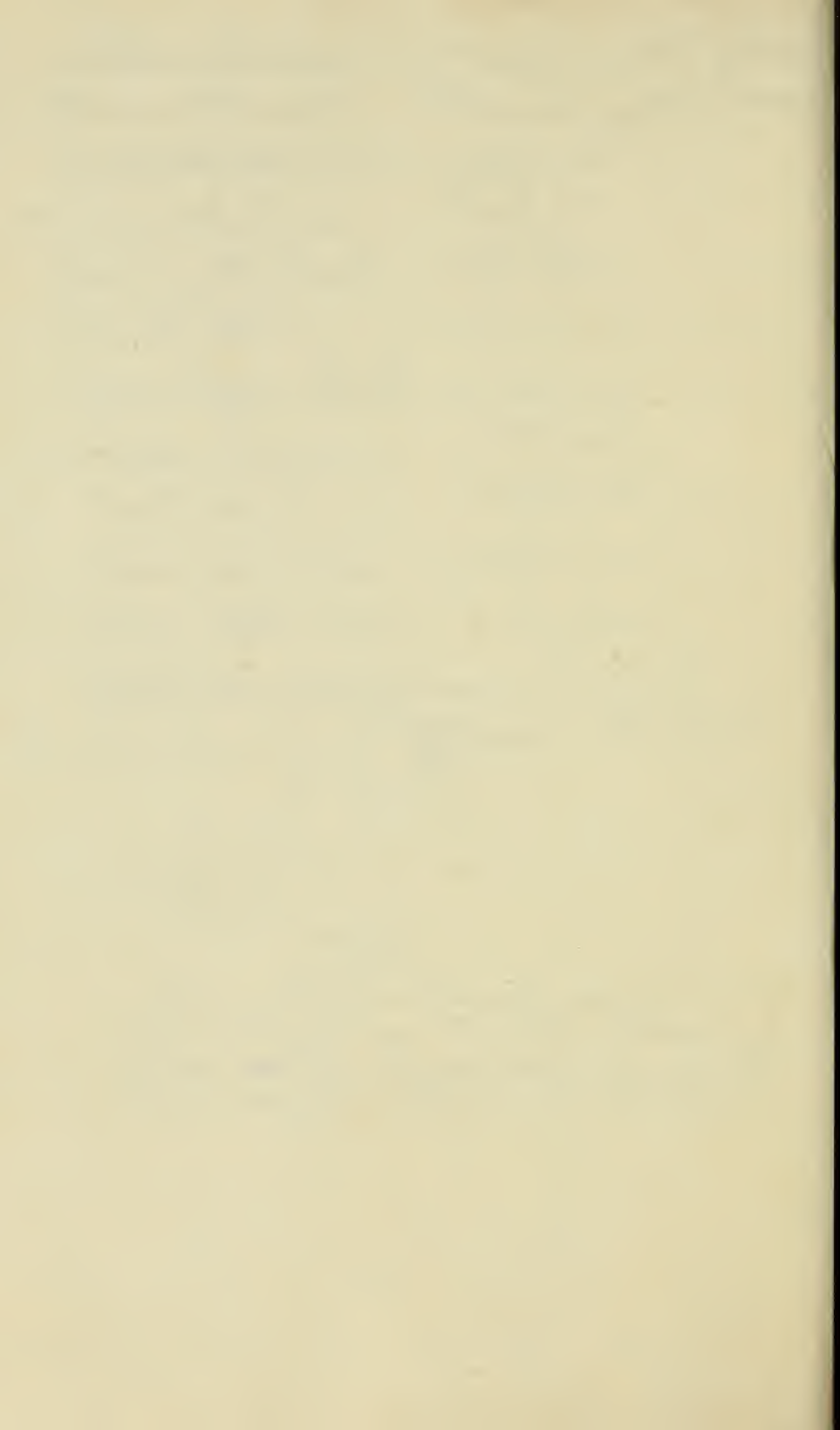
Ministers - 21

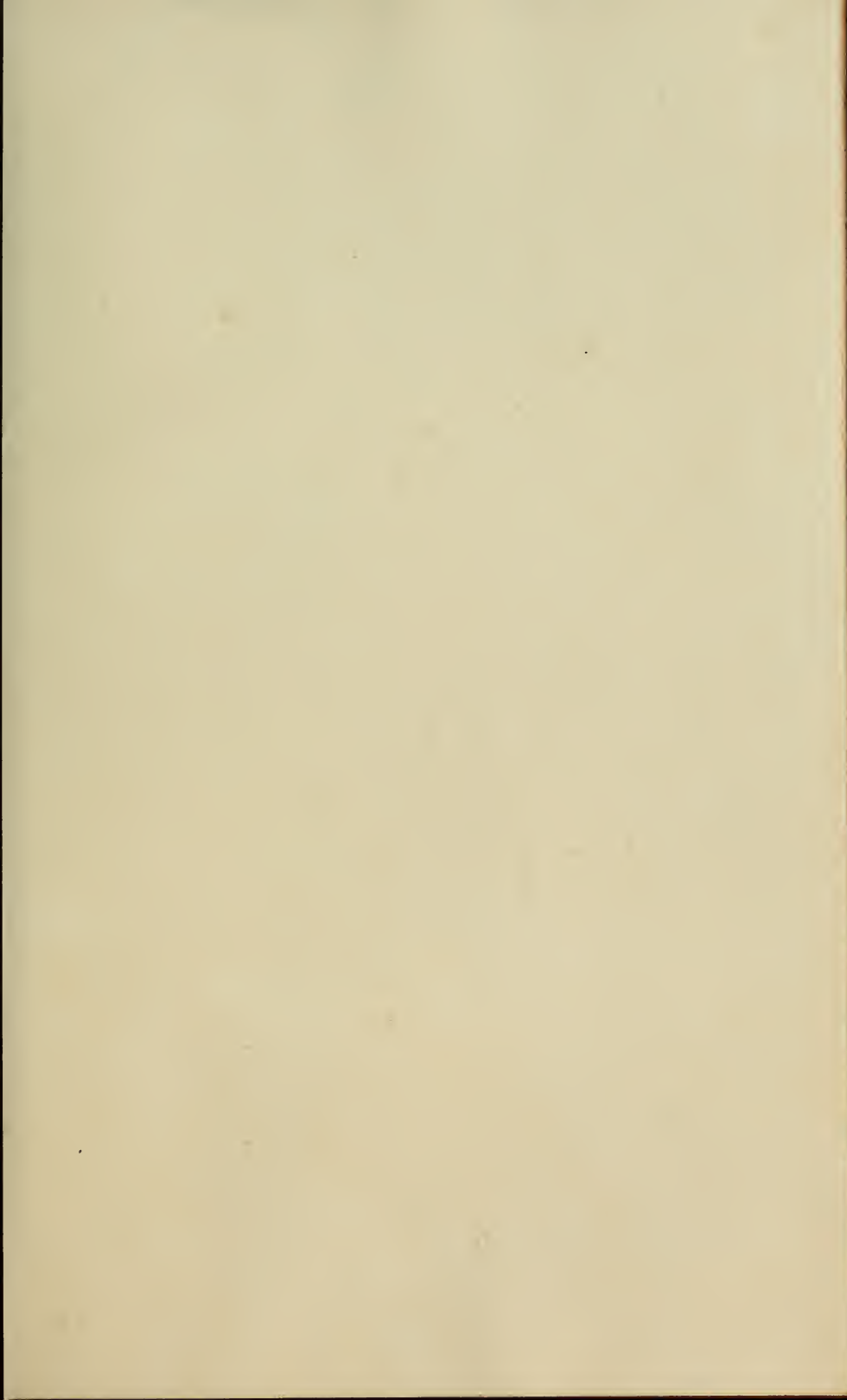
Preachers - 7

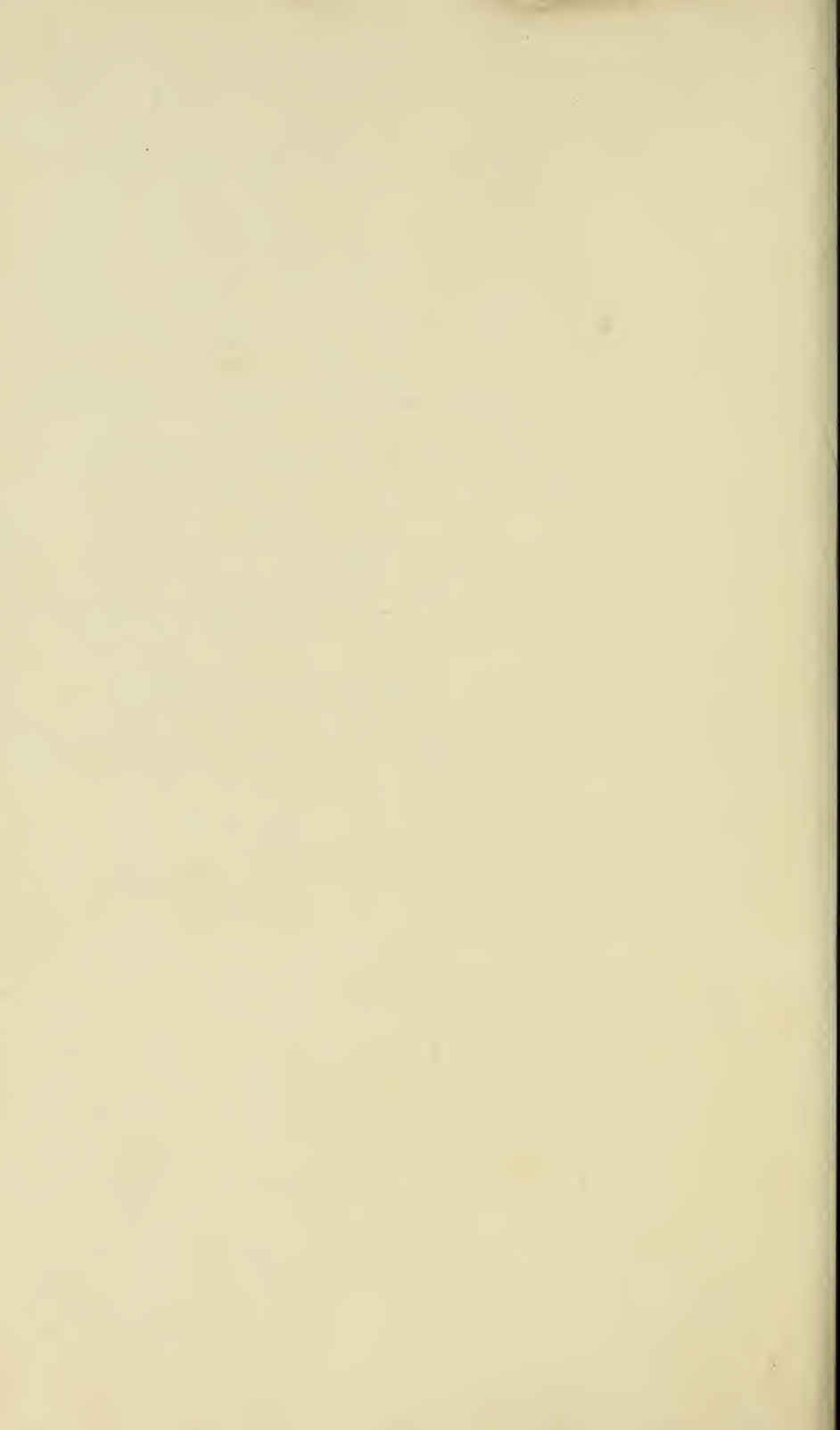
Students 11

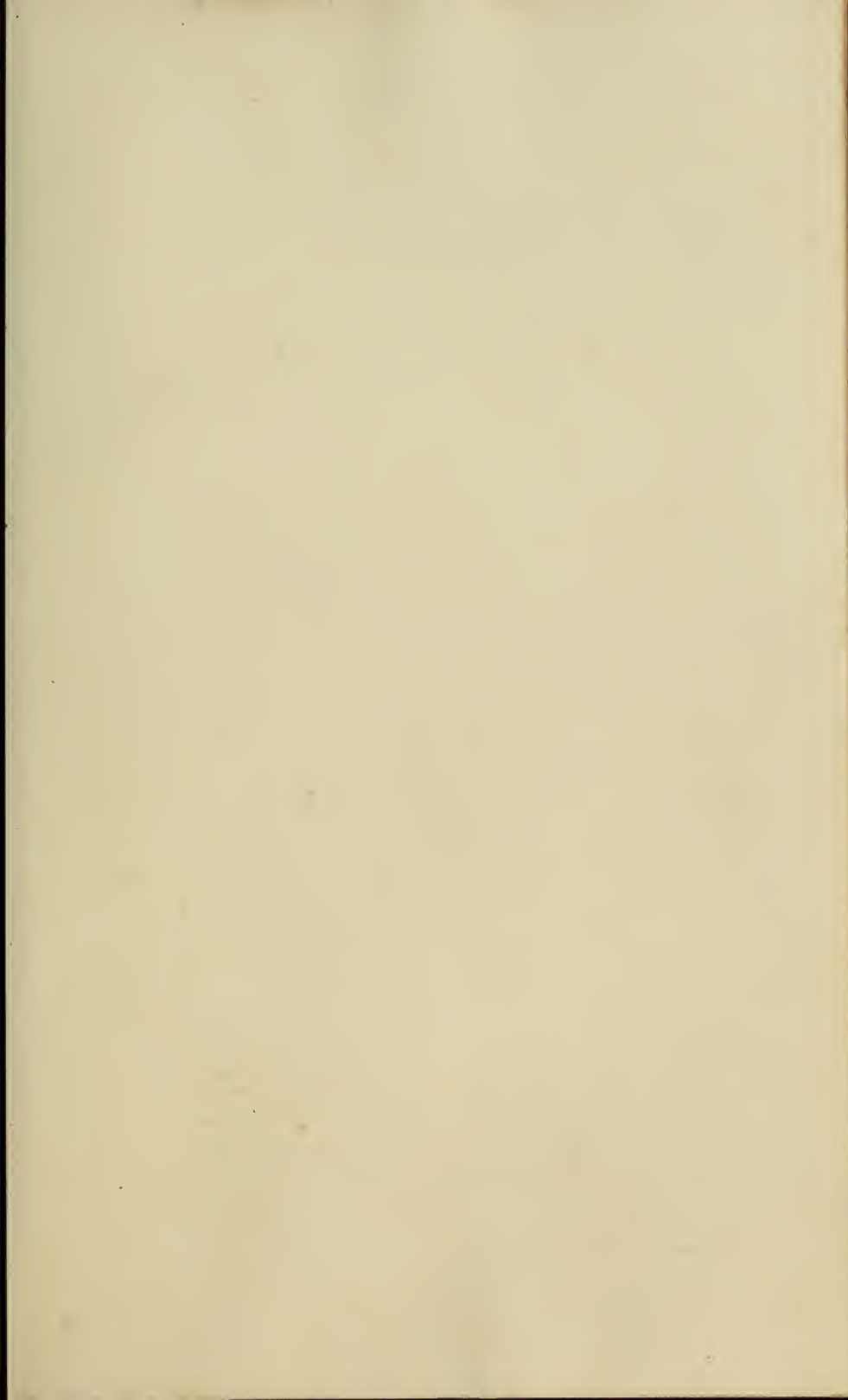
39

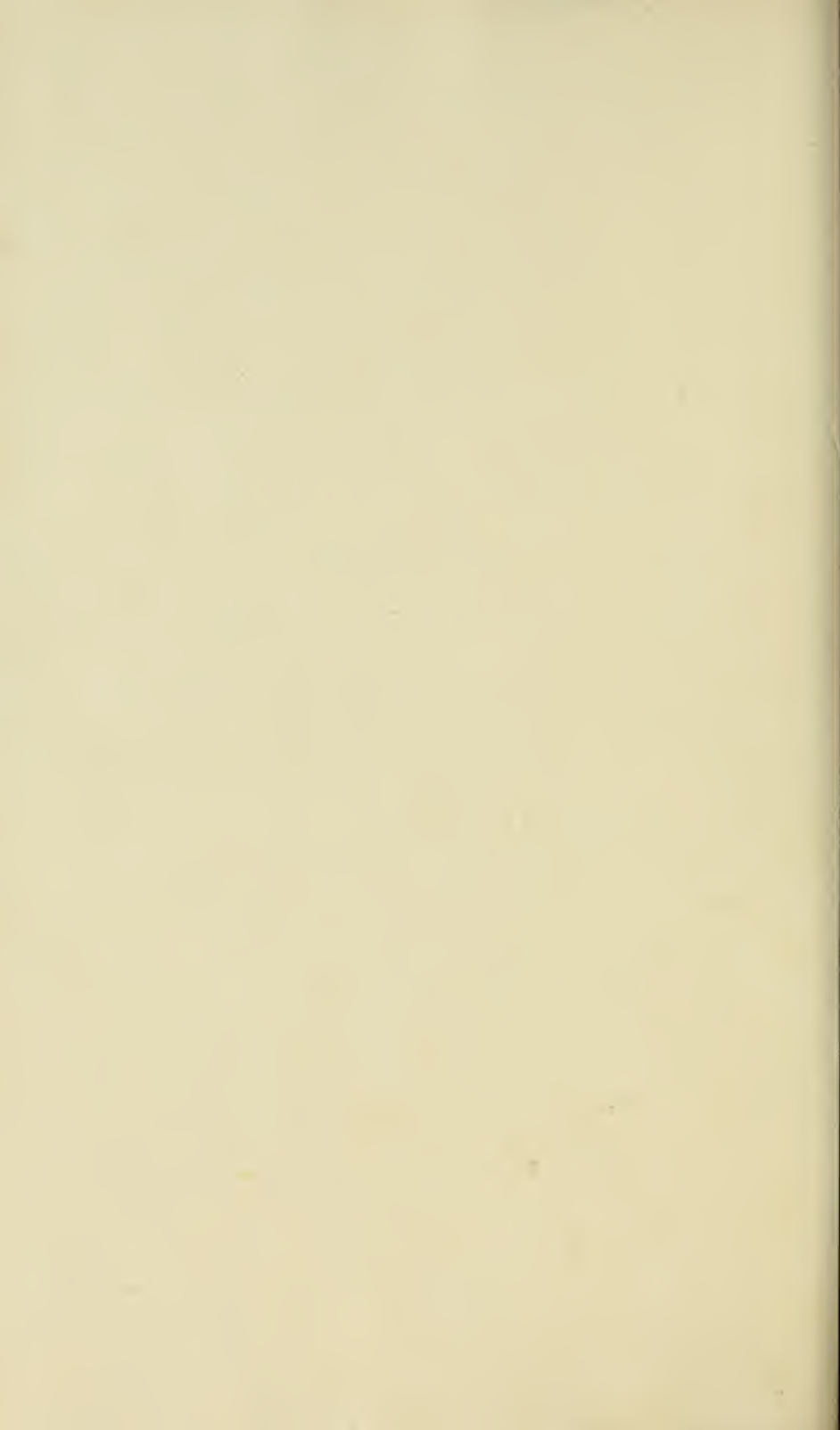
Besides these, two Ministers were prevented from attending, viz, Mr Willm Mitchel at Elola, ~~and~~ by old age & infirmity, and Mr Richd Black at Perth, by family distress.

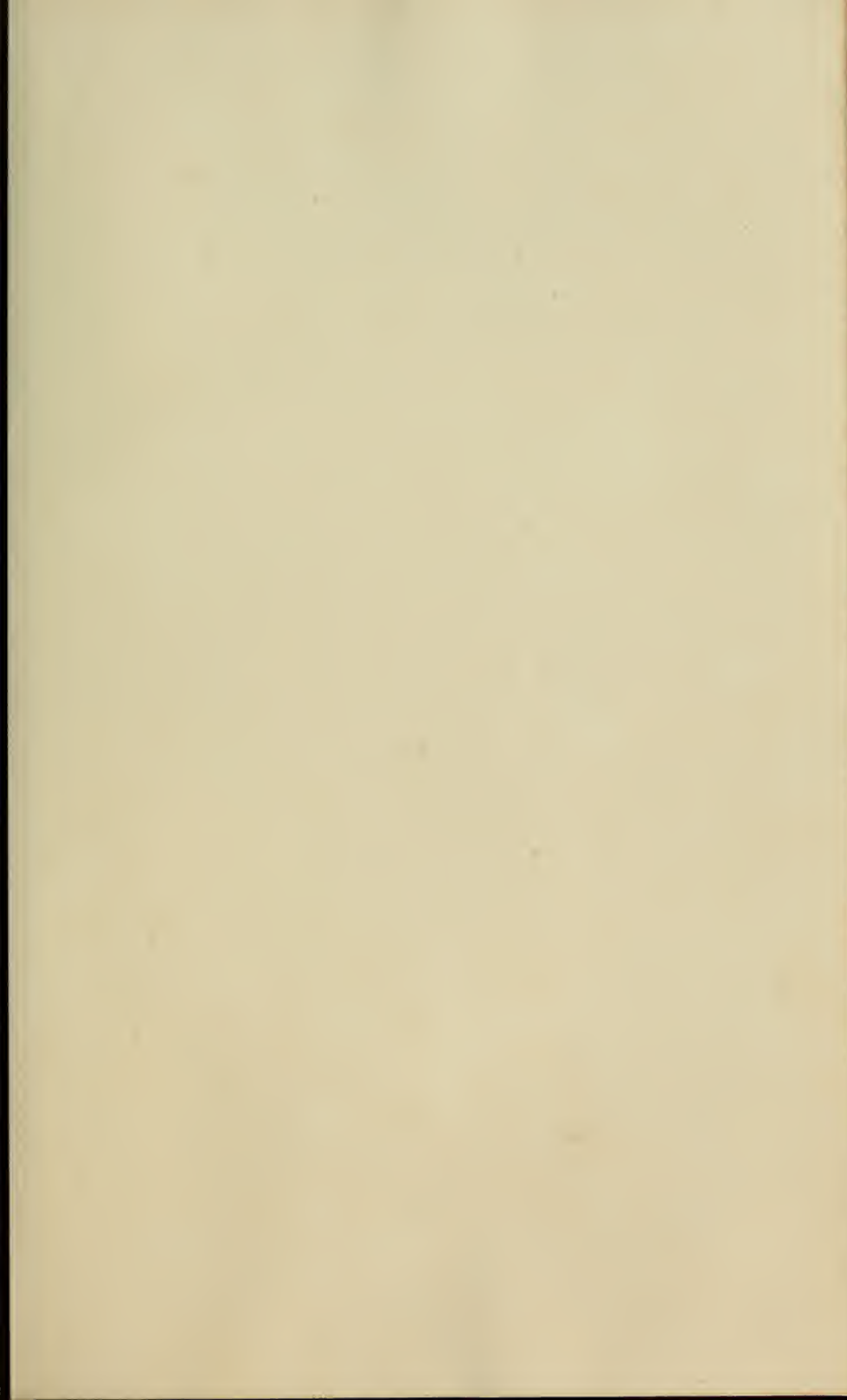


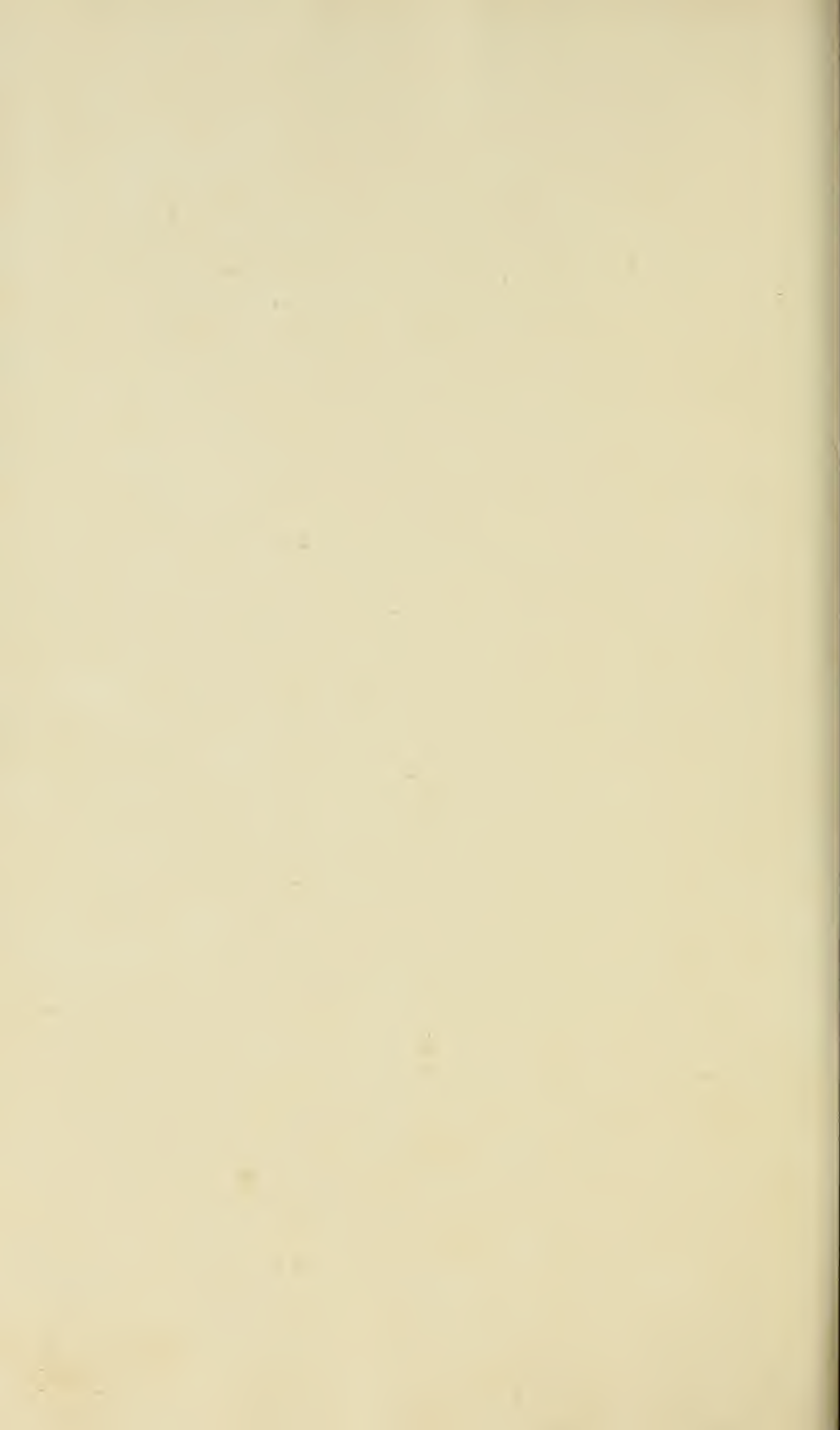


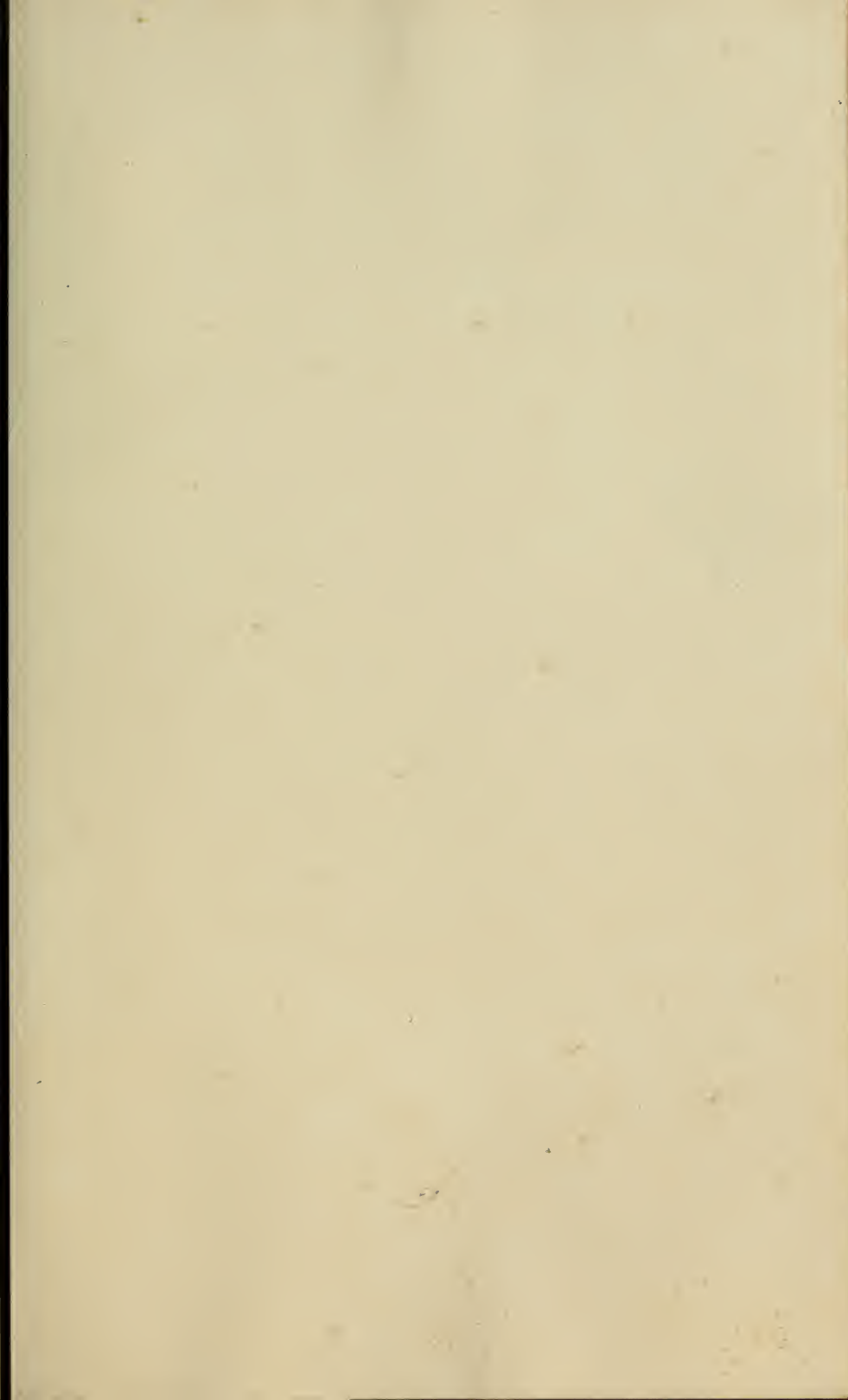


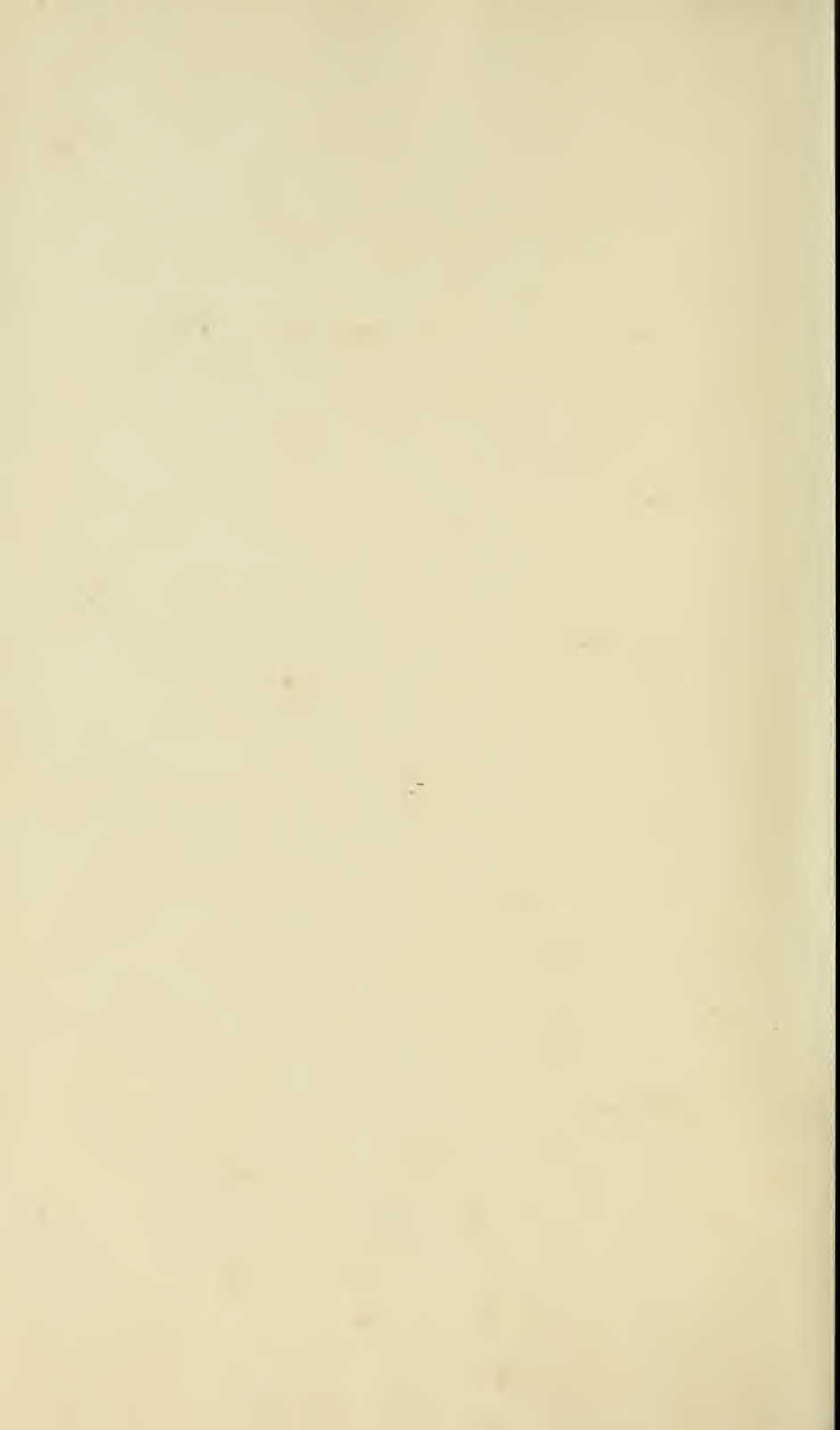


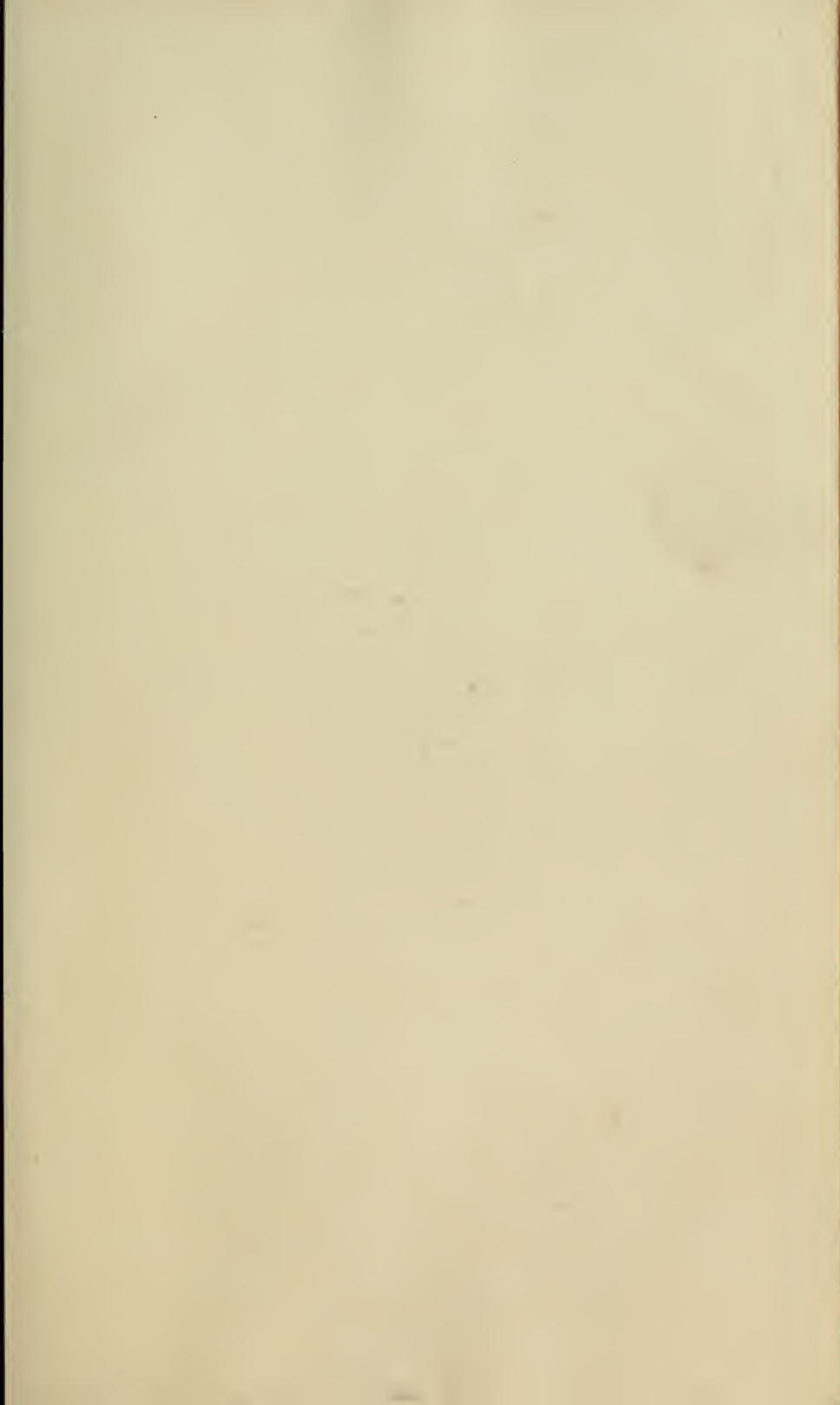




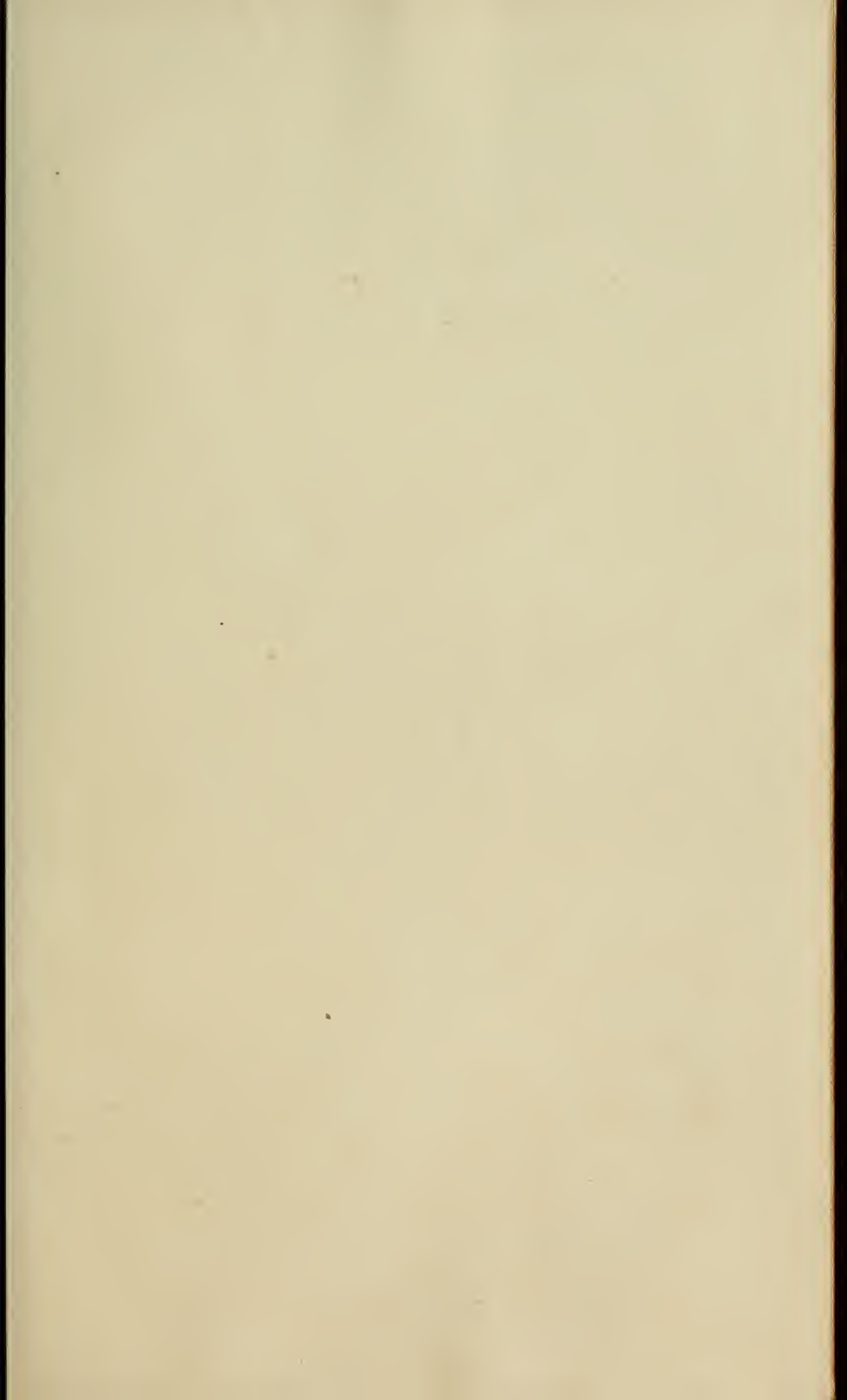




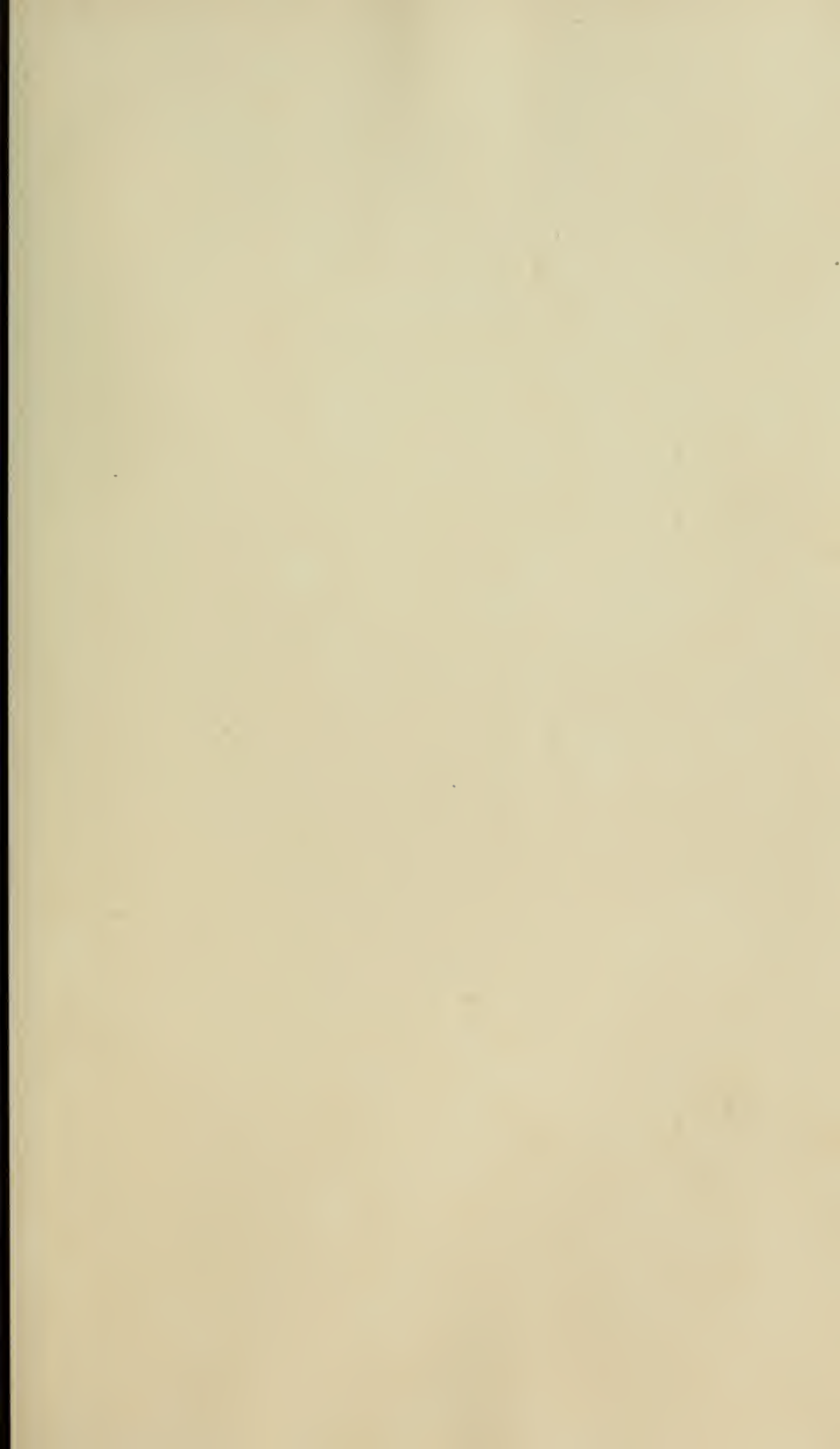




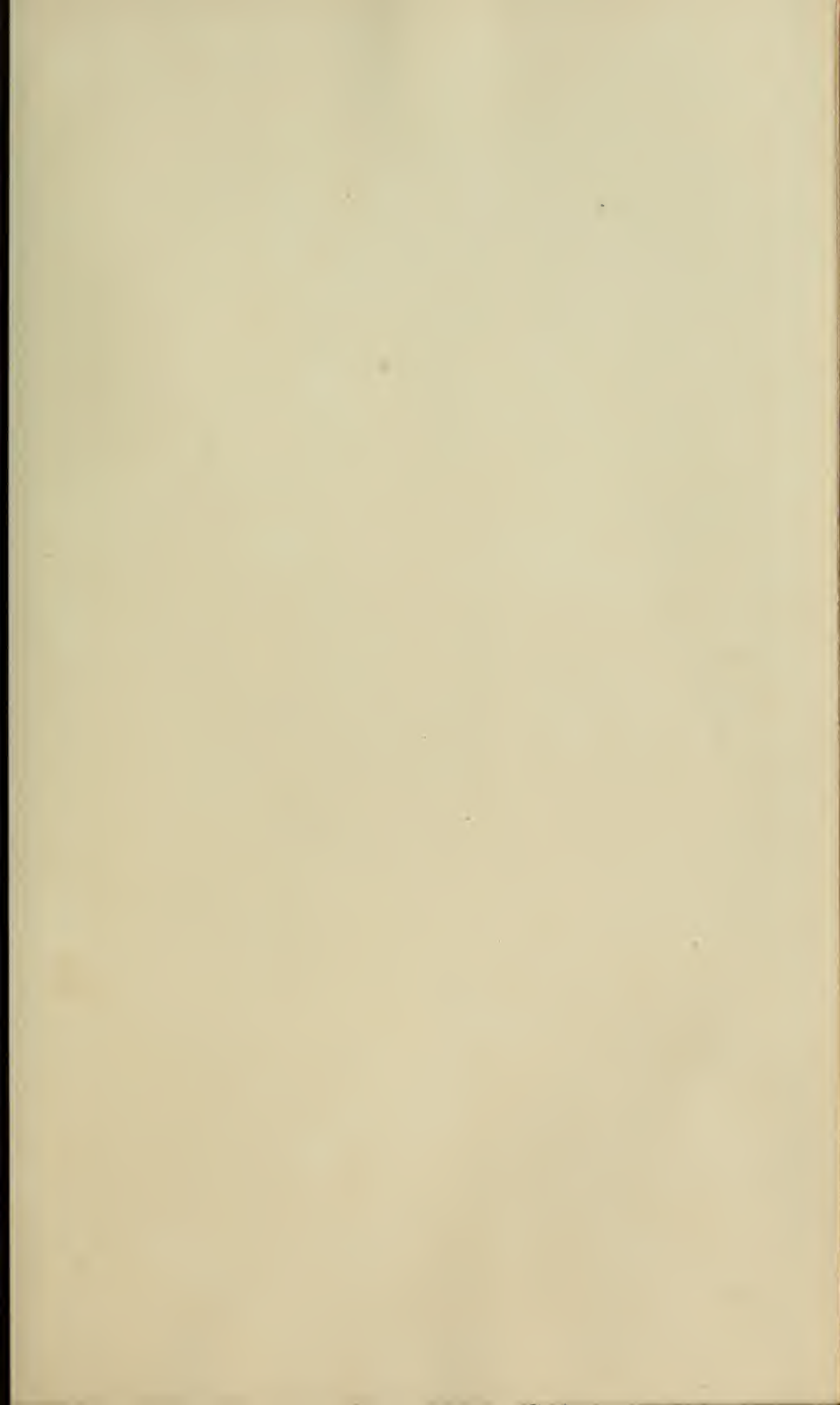




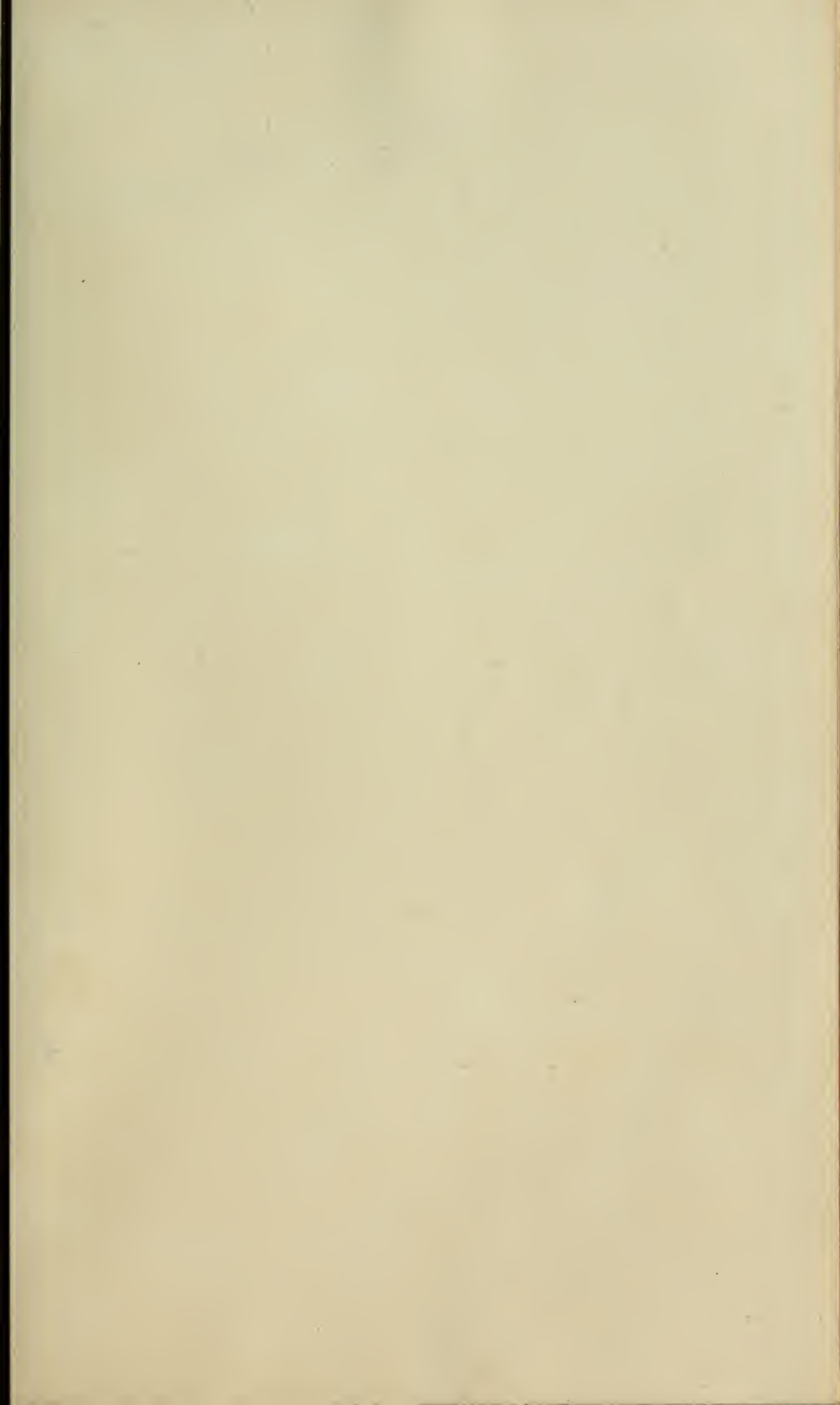












7

663





